

body who would carry into effect Hancock's suggestions.

This Color-Sergeant, in a wild and dramatic way, stood beside Hancock's frisky horse and made his little speech, which was listened to with more apparent deference than had been accorded to Hancock. I am not conscious of having any personal feeling or prejudice against Gen. Hancock—in fact I am politically the other way—but think as a chronicler of events that I can perfectly fair now in my estimation of men and events which occurred 25 years ago. This Color-Sergeant and Hancock had a little scene on the hill to which almost everybody else was obnoxious, having as much as they could attend to at the time themselves. But I heard the



INTERVIEWING GEN. PLEASANTON.

Sergeant said in quite a loud voice: "I'll take the flag down here," pointing to the stone wall just below, "if these men will stand by me." Hancock replied in a low voice, tremulous with excitement, at which the color-bearer and a few men started down toward the stone wall, which was the last I ever saw or heard of them, although I have little doubt if this man lived through the battle he was favorably mentioned in Hancock's report, and got his commission, as it was a brave act on the part of the color-bearer; but I can't help but think it would have looked better to my eyes at least if he had stopped with his colors at the wall on his way up, and not have made his little speech for apparent effect.

Perhaps some person will ask why Gen. Hancock and Doubleday did not lay claim to the credit of this maneuver at the time. Probably they did, but this I know neither. Hancock was Hancock's senior, and as such was entitled to the command during Hancock's absence. But through some heinous error of command, which he did not do, and so the matter stands to-day.

HANCOCK'S IMPRESSIONS.

Hancock was a noble-looking soldier. There was something in his appearance during a fight while on his large horse that was wonderfully impressive. Sheridan's ride up the Valley, in which his presence is credited with turning a disastrous defeat into a victory, was no more important in its results, in my estimation, than Hancock's dash and well-timed arrival on Cemetery Hill on the afternoon of the first day of Gettysburg. There can be little doubt that his prompt action secured the position, and his very presence while talking with Howard served to check the fugitives who were passing over the hill in droves.

It may also be asked why I bring this subject up at this late date, and after Hancock's death? For years I have avoided all talk on the subject of army experience. I would have sooner asked Hancock to take a drink in a public bar-room than to have broached this matter to him. He was not the sort of man who invited everybody's opinion. He always impressed me, and I was near him often, with the feeling that he was the ideal Regular soldier, and could only be approached through official channels. It was probably to this disposition to leave everything to official reports that can be attributed the fact that he did not always obtain through the newspapers the credit to which he was clearly entitled.

I therefore contented that Hancock is the hero of Gettysburg, not only of the third, but of the first day; and had been in supreme command and remained unharmed, Gen. Lee would not have gotten away so easily; the war might have ended a year sooner than it did, and more than likely Gettysburg would have been in history what Appomattox now is, while Grant would have equally divided honors with Hancock. I sometimes think that, like a great many other good generals in the East, Hancock was secured by the promotion of Grant's Western men to the best positions in the Army of the Potomac.

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I was seated on my horse by the side of the big-headed fag of the old Cemetery, and before I could get the rebels were near a mile-half struck the hill, and the work of the gate, which I found upon examination was but a few feet above my head.

"SOMEONE'S CHILD."

I had turned briskly around in search of some of my recent companions to tell them that evidently the rebels had been secured places on the roof, when I was almost paralyzed to discover that they had disappeared; scarcely anybody to be seen, save a lot of infantry who were hugging the ground all around. Not being under the influence of any particular officer, I was, of course, like "nobody's child," and had to look out for myself. I hurriedly got behind the hill, when to my consternation I heard for the first time the rapid, sharp hammer-like firing over on Culp's Hill, which seemed to me to be directly in our rear. It is a general fact that the rebels had almost in the rear of our position on Cemetery Hill. A glance at a map will explain this. Cemetery Hill projects like the point or promontory of a peninsula into the sea of the rebel army, which was apparently on three sides of it.

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No! patient, long-suffering Army of the Potomac. Its greatest battles were fought while Meade and Hancock were subordinate to General Grant, and it was Grant who led it to the Wilderness and Cold Harbor. Everybody on Cemetery Hill did their utmost to check the shattered column which had been doubled back from the right and the officers and men thrown into confusion; and the few men of the staff had a hard time to rally these demoralized soldiers, for, as is well known to everybody, they had no connection with the army, a body of men whose broken are about as hard to control as a resistless mountain torrent.

I became so much engaged in this person, that for a while I neglected to look around to see what was happening elsewhere. The men had come up from town, and all stopped on the hill behind the wall, their guns cocked and lying across the top.

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body, thinking if he was somewhere about I would attach myself to him as a means to get me out safely. But he was nowhere in sight, neither was the Cemetery Hill. I saw the big guns I had just left on the hill, and glancing down the Baltimore road to the rear, I saw such signs of general confusion that it gave me the impression that we were going to be hurled back.

I thought then that Hancock had made an awful big mistake in allowing the men up there to be caught in the rear while lying behind the stone wall looking in the opposite direction. I was not the only one who entertained this opinion at that juncture, by a large majority. But future events proved that Hancock was right, and that we were all wrong.

I went back over the same old road along which I had dashed so gallantly in the morning, and did not stop until safely established near Gen. Pleasanton, and so far to the rear that the sound of guns did not disturb my rest that night.

PLEASANTON AND GETTYSBURG.

As another historical fact about the disputed question of securing the position on the first day, I will relate the personal opinion of Gen. Pleasanton regarding this point. Everybody knows that Pleasanton commanded the Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Potomac, and he had for subordinate division commanders such gallant men as Custis, Kilpatrick, and Buford, of the First, Second and Third Divisions, which gained for that army most of the glory it achieved—a great deal of which Sheridan and the Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Potomac, and a number of other Eastern Generals, became soured at the promotion of the Western men over them, which fact should not be lost sight of to-day.

I have heard Pleasanton say repeatedly that he had the evidence that Lee was making for Gettysburg during the Antietam campaign the year previous to the battle of Gettysburg, and in anticipation of this fact, sent a Prussian (who was an officer on his staff, whose name is entirely too long to remember and too hard to spell with a squad of cavalry) to Gettysburg, and that this officer made a careful topographical map of the country, which map was filed among McClellan's papers, and Pleasanton claims this document will yet be found to establish the correctness of his opinion. I have heard at the matter as a professional soldier, Pleasanton discovered that Lee had wisely selected Gettysburg for the battleground, as all the roads of the country led to it, and that Lee had strategically a good point for rapid concentration. Besides this, he could fight his army with the South Mountain like a great wall, and the Potomac River, and the Blue Mountains on either flank, so that in case of disaster the passes of the mountain would easily protect a retreat. You will observe that this is the position of the Cavalry Corps.

Now, Gen. Pleasanton asserts that, knowing these matters a year previous, he had, as Chief of Cavalry, sent Buford out in 1863 to secure the position in advance of Lee's anticipated attack. This is important, and I am glad to be glad to furnish THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE Gen. Pleasanton's autograph for the statement.

All know that Buford did go out alone, and after a careful personal examination of the position, he drove back and held the ground, with Reynolds's assistance, until, as rebel officers say, and as was repeated by some of them at the time, Buford was "overpowered." They seem to forget that it was the Union forces who were overpowered the first and second days. As a rule, the forces actually engaged were not matched, and the result was a great battle. It is becoming monotonous to hear the rebels say: "We were overpowered by numbers and resources." They were practically solid in the South, and were on their own ground, and the Union forces were not equal to an army of observation—equal to an army of observation—equal to the active aid and sympathy of another army of Copperheads in our rear, while the English and the French were in the background, and the very best munitions of war. Of course there was only a small proportion, comparatively, in number who surrendered to Gen. Grant, but there was as many more deserters who went over to the enemy, and I give it as my private opinion that these blowers were among this lot.

I wish some one well versed would look up the history of the Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Potomac, and see what was done in the world, there is an instance to be found of so great a surrender of men and arms, where they had such aid and resources, with superior right and liberty at stake. I also wish some one would look up the history of this question of "overpowering and resources."

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